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Sixty-seventh session

Official Records

39th plenary meeting
Thursday, 15 November 2012, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Jeremić ..... (Serbia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Schaper (Netherlands), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 30 and 117 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council

Report of the Security Council (A/67/2)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): I would like to thank Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, President of the Security Council, for presenting the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/67/2) at the preceding meeting. I would also like to convey our appreciation to the delegation of Colombia for coordinating the preparation of the introduction to the report, a process that also involved a consultative meeting with the general membership.

Pakistan supports the efforts to improve the analytical and qualitative value of the Council's annual report. The statistical data and other information contained in the report is a useful compendium for quick reference and an overview of the Council's work during the reporting period. We appreciate the hard work of the Secretariat in that regard.

The interest and active participation in today's debate confirm the report's value. Of course there is room to enrich and sharpen its analytical content. The general membership closely follows the Council's proceedings. Today therefore presents an opportunity to review and comment on the Council's performance in carrying out its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

The report shows the range of the Security Council's agenda, from country-specific to regional situations, from terrorism to non-proliferation. It also covers thematic issues such as the rule of law, the protection of civilians, women and peace and security, children and armed conflict — issues that cut across many situations on the Council's agenda.

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding have proved to be effective tools for the Council to deal with various conflict and non-conflict situations. Sierra Leone and Burundi are success stories. We have witnessed progress in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. As a major participant in United Nations peacekeeping missions, Pakistan is proud of its own contribution to international efforts in those situations and elsewhere in Africa.

Recently, we have also seen some setbacks. The Council has been trying to redress the difficulties in Guinea-Bissau, the recurring problems in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the eruption of the crisis in Mali. The interplay of the situation in Mali with the wider Sahel region has received the Council's close attention. All of those processes have reinforced comprehensive and holistic approaches underpinned by regional cooperation and international support.

The Council's sustained engagement with regional organizations contributed to the positive developments

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in Somalia. The result is regional consensus and cohesion on a situation that had been abandoned as intractable. The African Union has worked in tandem with the Security Council to resolve outstanding issues between the Sudan and South Sudan.

The Council's continued engagement with Haiti remains crucial. The swift movement towards stability in Timor-Leste has enabled the country to graduate from the Council's agenda. We in the United Nations can all take pride in that achievement. It is a job well done. In Afghanistan, the United Nations plays an important role, and it is poised to play an even greater role in the years to come, especially after 2014.

The Council has been deliberating on the situation in the Middle East, a region where the quest for peace and stability continues. The situation in Syria has added new complexities and uncertainties to the regional situation. For its part, Pakistan will continue to support efforts for a peaceful resolution of the Syrian conflict, one that reflects the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. It is the international community's collective responsibility to prevent escalation of the Syrian situation and its spillover to neighbouring countries.

It is regrettable that there has been no movement on the agreed two-State solution for the long-standing Palestinian issue, although it has been debated frequently in the Council. It is ironic that the Council's own resolutions have not been respected, most notably those on the construction of settlements in the occupied territory and the blockade of Gaza. We have consistently urged Council members to demonstrate greater political will to ensure implementation of the Council's resolutions. Pakistan supports a sovereign, independent, viable and contiguous State of Palestine, living side by side with all its neighbours in peace and security.

Divisive approaches and positions undermine the Council's authority and vitiate the environment for decision-making. Pakistan believes that unity within the Council will enable it to take effective collective action. We support efforts to foster consensus and promote cohesiveness in the Council, so that we can work for the overarching goal of international peace and security.

The views of the general membership on the work of the Security Council are of fundamental importance for the Council itself in reviewing its performance and making improvements where required. Apart from this annual debate, the general membership should have more opportunities to give its feedback throughout the year.

As a current non-permanent member, serving for the seventh time in the Council, we can say candidly that there is room for improving the Council's working methods, particularly with regard to transparency and inclusiveness. Non-permanent members, who are elected by the General Assembly and are therefore accountable to the general membership, have an added responsibility to help improve the Council's methods and procedures. Pakistan has therefore actively contributed to the discussion on the subject in the Council and in its Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

I now turn to the second item on the agenda today — Security Council reform. Pakistan supports a comprehensive reform that would make the Security Council democratic in composition, effective in decision-making and accountable to the general membership. We believe that Council reform should transcend current global power politics. Reform should not only be based on contemporary realities but should also take into account the likely changes in the future. Our approach should be dynamic, not static or anachronistic.

Pakistan believes that modest expansion of the Council by adding new electable seats would make it more representative and transparent and would ensure its relevance to present and emerging global realities. New seats based on periodic elections would also make the Council more equitable, diverse and plural in terms of representation, as well as more open and accountable, to reflect the aspirations of the general membership. Such a reform model would enhance ownership of the Security Council and increase its credibility.

Security Council reform remains a contentious issue. No single model enjoys the requisite support of Member States. To make progress, it is therefore essential to explore common middle ground through flexibility and compromise.

Originally, Pakistan sought expansion only in the non-permanent category. But now Pakistan, along with other members of the Uniting for Consensus group, supports the proposal for long-term seats as explained in the Italy/Colombia proposal. The fact is that it is the only compromise proposal on the table.

Our proposal does not serve the interest of its authors but rather offers a collective bargain to reform a United Nations organ whose membership and ownership is shared by all States. Our proposal has the capacity to absorb and accommodate present and future realities. In a rapidly changing global geopolitical landscape, our proposal rises above individual national ambitions. It reflects the political configuration of the real world, in which a few large States, a number of medium-sized States, a majority of small States and regional organizations will be able to play their role effectively to promote international peace and security.

The Italy/Colombia paper is a realistic basis for forward movement in the reform process. Unlike other proposals on the table, it is not a take-it-or-leave-it offer. It provides a framework for real dialogue on an achievable final outcome. The proposal also serves the dual purpose of modestly expanding the Council while ensuring wider representation for regional and cross-regional groups such as the African Union and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

With a view to building bridges, we will continue to reach out to various groups, including the Forum of Small States and the African Group. Pakistan, as a member of Uniting for Consensus, wishes to engage closely with diverse groups in order to share and understand one another's perspectives and pursue our common objectives. We respect and support the African common position. Africa's just demand for a permanent presence on the Security Council is made on behalf of the entire continent. It is therefore different from the demands of those seeking permanent seats for themselves. We see adequate space in the Uniting for Consensus reform model to accommodate the African position as a special case based on a concept of continent-specific seats. We strongly believe that any solution that excludes Africa or African participation will be incomplete and therefore untenable.

Under the current Assembly presidency, real progress towards Security Council reform is possible. We welcome the President's letter of 9 November and appreciate the wide consultations he has held. We agree with him that predictability and full transparency remain essential ingredients in the ongoing process. We welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. The issues on the table are sensitive and the positions divergent. It is our earnest hope that the Chair will be attentive to all viewpoints and concerns, and we appeal to him to be so. Transparency is a precondition for effective and inclusive work.

The intergovernmental negotiation schedule should be formulated through consultations under the overall guidance of the President of the General Assembly. We stress the Member State-driven nature of the negotiating process. Proposals and recommendations that have not been mandated or agreed on by the membership cannot form a basis for our work. An important lesson learned in the past two years of the process of intergovernmental negotiations is that divisive tactics, piecemeal approaches, showdowns on issues of choice, and majority-minority claims only prolong the impasse and vitiate the atmosphere for negotiations. We must avoid such pitfalls in the current session. The reform process cannot be held hostage to individual national pursuits of permanent seats through self-serving drafts that have failed to garner any support. It is time to proceed in a spirit of flexibility, based on the agreed principles of decision 62/557.

I conclude by commending the role of the President of the Assembly in steering the process of Security Council reform. He has a focused, hands-on, fair, impartial and inclusive approach. We admire it and support his efforts in that regard. We assure him of our full cooperation.

Mr. Núñez Mosquera (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba takes note of the report of the Security Council (A/67/2) and notes with concern that it continues to be fundamentally stuck in descriptive mode, lacking the analytic focus that Member States need for an in-depth assessment of its work. In that connection, my delegation insists on the need for the Council to present special reports to the General Assembly, in fulfilment of paragraph 1 of Article 15 and paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Members of the United Nations have entrusted that body of limited membership the fundamental responsibility for acting on our behalf in the maintenance of international peace and security. However, in discharging those functions, the Security Council is obliged to act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as laid down in paragraph 2 of Article 24 of the Charter. Cuba would like to point out the Council's responsibility to give due account to the Assembly and to comply with the provisions of the Charter.

Regarding agenda item 117, Cuba reiterates the need to accomplish an urgent and thorough reform of the Security Council. Genuine United Nations reform can come about only when the Council is democratized and becomes a truly transparent structure that acts in a way that is consistent with the rule of law at the international level and deals appropriately with challenges around the globe.

Security Council reform cannot continue to be postponed as a goal of the United Nations. The Council's necessary transformation is an imperative for the international community, and ignoring that demand is not only damaging but is an insult to the Member States. Our delegation supports immediate expansion of the Council in both membership categories, permanent and non-permanent. Other supposed alternatives, such as increasing only the number of non-permanent seats, would merely prolong the current problems, further widening the already enormous gap between permanent and non-permanent members. It is extremely unfair that currently, with its agenda plagued with items related to Africa, the Security Council has no permanent representative from that continent, or from Latin America and the Caribbean. Nothing justifies this lack of permanent participation on the part of the developing countries in an organ of major importance in the Organization.

Cuba does not support discrimination of any kind among sovereign States. Our country unreservedly respects the principles of the Charter and of international law, and we therefore believe that any new permanent members should have the same rights and obligations as the present ones. The admission of new permanent members without veto power would be equivalent to creating a new category of Council members, which Cuba does not favour. There is no justification for developing countries entering as new permanent members having a lesser status than the current ones.

Cuba's position has been and continues to be very clear with regard to the veto. The veto should be eliminated as soon as possible. That privilege has become anachronistic and antidemocratic. It is offensive that the will of the international community, which is expressed through General Assembly resolutions, has no impact in resolving global problems and that, instead, in the Security Council, everything is reduced to the will or opinion of one country or a limited number of countries which, because of the right of the veto, throws out and ignores the voice of the members of the Organization.

With regard to the size of the Security Council, Cuba believes that an enlarged Council should include no less than 26 members. With that figure, the proportion between the number of Security Council members and the overall membership of the United Nations would be similar to that which existed when the United Nations was created.

Reform of the Security Council should encompass a far-reaching transformation. We cannot transform the structures if we do not change the working methods, procedures and practices. The Council's working methods must evolve. Although some modest changes have taken place in recent years, most of them have been more formal than substantive.

The reality today is that the Security Council is not transparent, democratic or effective, much less does its work represent the interests of the international community. Cuba advocates and calls for the creation of a Security Council in which closed consultations are the exception. We hope to see a Council that deals with the issues that properly fall to it, with an agenda that includes genuine international challenges and does not encroach upon issues that are within the competence of other United Nations organs. Cuba wants to see a Security Council that takes into account the opinions of the membership of the Organization before it adopts decisions and that ensures genuine access to States that are not members of that body.

Urgent actions are required. We cannot prolong this debate any further. Reform of the Security Council requires urgent, genuine negotiations, in which the President of the General Assembly has a fundamental role to play in promoting progress. It is imperative to transform the current reality and eliminate the failings and the lack of transparency, democracy and efficiency in the Council's work. We cannot afford the luxury of waiting forever for the will of the international community and the mandates of the General Assembly to be fulfilled.

Mr. Sin Son Ho (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to express my confidence that, under the President's able leadership, realistic and innovative proposals aimed at reforming the Security Council will be devised through the current intergovernmental negotiations.

The current agenda item provides a good opportunity for the General Assembly to assess the work of the Security Council under the Charter of the United Nations and improve its working methods. The work of the Security Council in the period under review can be characterized by a lack of impartiality and credibility and abuse of power. In particular, the Council continues to be misused as a tool by a few countries to ignore all principles of international relations, including those related to sovereign equality, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and to legitimize their unilateral actions to further their own interests.

A typical example is that of the United States and its blind followers, who pressured the Security Council to adopt a presidential statement on 16 April 2012 (S/PRST/2012/13) and condemned the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for launching a satellite for peaceful purposes. As we are all aware, the transparency and peaceful nature of the launch of our satellite was fully covered in various media, going beyond what is required by standard international practice in the field. The United States argument that the satellite launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was in fact the launch of a long-range ballistic missile was denied by the international mass media following confirmation of the facts. Nevertheless, the United States ridiculously went on to demand that the Democratic People's Republic not launch even a peaceful satellite.

Our satellite launch was an exercise of a legitimate right granted to the States parties to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which stands above Security Council resolutions. The Council has never considered a single one of the innumerable launches of satellites worldwide, including of military satellites, except for our satellite launch for peaceful purposes. That clearly reflects the deeply rooted hostile policy of the United States towards my country, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and it implies extreme selectivity, double standards and violation of international law. That is a stark reality today, and it serves as a tool for the interests of the United States and other Powers, giving rise to distrust of the Security Council's work among the Member States, as the Council is far from honouring its mandate to maintain international peace and security.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to exercise the sovereign right to use outer space, as enshrined in universal international law, which stand above Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic will continue to expand and intensify its outer space development institutions. It will launch application satellites, including the geostationary satellites necessary for national economic development in line with its national space programme.

I now come to the agenda item on the reform of the Security Council. The ongoing reform of the Council's undemocratic working methods should be taken up as a top priority and without delay. In order to play its role to the fullest as the authoritative body for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council should be impartial in its activities, as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. To that end, we must urgently create a mechanism whereby Security Council resolutions on sanctions and the use of armed force, which greatly affect international peace and security, would come into force only when they are approved by the General Assembly, as widely requested by international society.

Furthermore, the Security Council should enhance its credibility among Member States by respecting and reflecting the views of concerned countries in its consideration of major issues. It is also important to put an end to the Council practice whereby it abuses issues that fall within the mandate of the General Assembly, including economic, social and development issues. It creates obstacles to carrying out the work of the General Assembly and even weakens its authority.

Intergovernmental negotiations, which are being held for the third time this year, will provide a good opportunity to promote mutual understanding and reduce the differences between the groups through in-depth discussions on the Security Council reform proposals, including that of the group of countries that sponsored A/61/L.69/Rev.1. My delegation is of the view that, in order to make substantial progress in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, primary attention should be paid to the following issues.

First, Security Council reform should be oriented towards realizing the adequate representation of developing countries. The basic configuration of the Security Council was decided 67 years ago. The Security Council was originally made up of 11 member States, with six elected members and a total United Nations

membership of 51 States in 1945. In 1965, the number of Security Council members was increased to 15, with 10 elected members. Now, the changed reality of the twenty-first century necessitates a further increase in the Security Council membership, in conformity with the growth in the number of States Members of the United Nations to 193.

The developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America were colonies when the United Nations was created. But today those countries have all gained independence and constitute an overwhelming majority in the membership of the United Nations. Therefore, the enlargement of the Security Council is essentially an issue of increasing the representation of developing countries. From the viewpoint of today's changing international relations, developing countries from the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America should be represented in desirable positions in the United Nations, as they are the biggest political force.

Secondly, the most reasonable way to reform the Security Council is to resolve issues on a point-by-point basis, beginning with an issue on which an agreement can be reached. My delegation is of the view that the most reasonable and practical way of expanding the Security Council at present is to go ahead with the expansion of the non-permanent category first, while putting off the issue of the expansion of the permanent membership for the time being, in the light of the serious differences and different views still existing among countries.

In the case of enlargement of the permanent membership, it is agreed that those countries that are capable of making genuine contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security should be accepted as permanent members. In that regard, Japan cannot be regarded as eligible to be a permanent member of the Security Council. In the past, Japan inflicted all sorts of unprecedented suffering and misfortune upon the Asian people, including the Korean people, but it is still reluctant to offer a sincere apology and full compensation for its crimes against humanity. Furthermore, Japan revised its middle-school history textbooks to justify its past crimes against humanity and openly disclosed its militaristic ambitions by continuing to pray at the Yasukuni shrine and take action aimed at becoming a military Power.

It is crystal clear that Japan, which is moving against the current trend of peace and development, has no political or moral qualifications and is totally unqualified to become a permanent member of the Security Council. Before seeking a permanent seat on the Security Council, Japan should gain the trust of the international community by, among other things, recognizing, apologizing and compensating for the invasion of Korea and other Asian countries and the extraordinary crimes against humanity committed in the past.

The Security Council reform should be aimed at enabling the Council to fully discharge its primary mandate of maintaining global peace and security, based on the purposes and principles of the Charter. If unilateralism, high-handedness and unusual force on the part of a certain country remains prevalent in the work of the Security Council, the Council will fail to fulfil its mandate as an organ for securing peace, and eventually it will be degraded as a tool serving the interests of the so-called super-Powers.

In conclusion, my delegation is looking forward to Security Council reform, in conformity with the ever-growing demand and aspirations of Member States to democratize the United Nations.

Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri (India): I am honoured to address the General Assembly on behalf of my country on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. At the outset, let me place on record the Indian delegation's appreciation for the commitment that the President has shown towards that important issue. We welcome the reappointment of the highly experienced and wise Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. His letter of July 2012, which captured the main elements of the eighth round of intergovernmental negotiations that were held during the previous General Assembly session, as well as the recommendations contained in the letter, are worthy of in-depth consideration during the current General Assembly session. We therefore call upon Ambassador Tanin, through the President of the General Assembly, to convene a meeting of the intergovernmental negotiations as soon as possible. We would also like to associate ourselves with the statement of the group of countries that sponsored A/61/L.69/Rev.1, delivered by Ambassador Raymond Wolfe of Jamaica (see A/67/PV.38).

India played an important role in ensuring that the process of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform was initiated and has played an active

role in the deliberations ever since their commencement in 2009. The current state of play in those negotiations was ably summed up by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of Four (G-4) countries in their joint press statement of 25 September. They stated that

> "an overwhelming majority of Member States voiced support for an expansion of the Security Council in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent."

Further, the Ministers expressed the view that the strong support for an expansion in both categories should be reflected in the negotiation process among Member States and called for the drafting of a concise working document as the basis for further negotiations in line with the recommendations of the chair of the negotiations. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the calls made by the G-4 Foreign Ministers and to express the determination of the Indian delegation to work towards the realization of those ends in the intergovernmental negotiations during the current session.

India is also a member of a group of developing countries called the L.69 group. That group has been most vocal and articulate in expressing the fervent desire among its membership for early reform of the Security Council in order to make it reflective of contemporary reality and also acknowledge the manifold changes that have taken place in the world since the Council was created in 1945.

It is therefore not at all surprising that the convergences between the L.69 group and the African States are increasing day by day. Members have heard Ambassador Raymond Wolfe clearly express the position of L.69 group on the question of the veto. Let me reiterate that we also support African aspirations for permanent membership with the veto.

There is also considerable convergence among the wider membership on other aspects. We have not yet heard one dissonant voice in respect of enhanced representation for Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, the Latin American and Caribbean region and Western European and other States, as well as an exclusive non-permanent seat for the small island developing States. The reformed Council is expected to have a size in the mid-20s.

Finally, the membership also wants the Council to continually improve its working methods and to see the General Assembly transform itself into the chief deliberative, legislative, policy-making and representative body of the international community.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that India is of the view that the reform and expansion of the Security Council are essential if it is to reflect the contemporary reality. Such an outcome will enhance the Council's credibility and effectiveness in dealing with global issues. The early reform of the Security Council must be pursued with renewed vigour and be urgently enacted. Let me also assure the President and the rest of the membership of our willingness to remain constructive on all issues on the table in the months to come. We urge other delegations to do likewise.

Ms. King (Australia): I thank the President for convening this joint debate on the annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2) and on Security Council reform. I also wish to thank the Security Council President, Ambassador Puri of India, for introducing the report this morning, and the Colombian delegation, under the leadership of Ambassador Osorio, for its careful preparation of the report.

The information contained in the report is a very important catalogue of the Council's activity — achievements and failings alike — and, as such, the report is an essential element in the Council's efforts to strengthen transparency regarding its deliberations. However, as others have said today and previously, strengthening the substantive elements of the report could only further assist that transparency. As Australia has said many times before, transparency is directly related to accountability for the Council's decisions.

The events of the past intensive year of work on the part of the Council have reinforced its critical role in maintaining peace and security. How effective the Council is in fulfilling its fundamental remit depends on the United Nations membership's efforts to ensure that effectiveness. The more representative, accessible and accountable the Council is, the better positioned it is to meet the globe's complex security challenges. We Member States need to intensify our efforts at this General Assembly session to achieve meaningful reform.

For Australia, Security Council reform has been a long-standing priority. We argued strenuously at the San Francisco Conference in 1945 for limits on the use of the veto. At that time, we also advocated the importance of transparency in the Council's work. We

remain firmly committed to those principles today. As an elected member of the Security Council from 2013 for a two-year term, Australia will advocate and support initiatives that enhance the Council's accessibility and transparency. We also wish to see progress on that score at this sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

We welcome the advice of the President on the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We consider that, under his continued stewardship, there is and should be scope for us to collectively gather momentum in the forthcoming rounds of the intergovernmental negotiations.

In anticipation of those negotiations, allow me to reiterate that we support an expansion of the Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories, while balancing the need for enhanced representation in the Council with the practical requirement of maintaining decision-making cohesion and effectiveness. We remain prepared to assist the negotiations by showing flexibility and creativity to find solutions. As others have said today, we have a very clear sense of where we all stand on those issues. It is now time to find some common ground.

On the question of membership, Australia strongly supports the inclusion of permanent representation from Africa on the Council. African countries comprise more than a quarter of the United Nations membership and contribute some two thirds of the Security Council's agenda. It is proper that the African continent take its permanent place in the Council's deliberations.

Australia also considers that, without prejudice to the achievement of reform on all five aspects of the intergovernmental negotiations, we can collectively realize immediate and tangible benefits in improving the Council's working methods. Australia considered that the draft resolution (A/66/L.42/Rev.2) introduced in May this year by the representative of the then group of five small nations contained some very reasonable measures that were consistent with our own ambitions for a more transparent and accessible Security Council. We were disappointed that the draft resolution was not taken forward. We would like to see efforts this year to enhance the way in which the Council operates. In that context, we acknowledge the progress achieved in the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and in particular thank Ambassador Cabral of Portugal for his efforts.

To conclude, Australia pledges its full support for the ongoing discussions on Security Council reform. We are committed to working closely and pragmatically with Ambassador Tanin and the membership to overcome the current stalemate and move to genuine negotiations. It is apparent, however, that to get to that stage delegations will have to show greater flexibility and some creativity in order to surmount the strong geopolitical obstacles that stand in our way.

Mr. Motanyane (Lesotho): I thank the President for convening this very important meeting. I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of India, in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of November, for presenting the annual report of the Council (A/67/2) before this body and the delegation of Colombia for its contribution to the production of that report. Allow me at the outset to align myself with the statements delivered at the 38th meeting by the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and of Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group, respectively.

Peace-loving nations came together in 1945 to unite their strength in order to maintain international peace and security. That sacred duty was conferred on the Security Council, for the Council to exercise it on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations. In that light, we view the presentation of the report of the Council to the General Assembly not as a ritualistic event that has to be performed in order to fulfil the requirements of the Charter but, more importantly, as an opportunity to account for actions taken on behalf of the entire United Nations membership. Furthermore, that presents a chance for the Council to interact with Member States and receive feedback on how to build on the gains made in the discharge of its mandate.

The report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012 is not materially different from the Council's previous annual reports to the General Assembly. Whereas there has been a surge in the number of open meetings held by the Council during the reporting period, the report nevertheless offers no analysis of the impact and influence, if any, that those meetings have had on the decisions and resolutions that the Council took during the period in question.

Open meetings promote transparency and inclusivity and undoubtedly afford the larger United Nations membership a rare chance to contribute to the work of the Council. It is mainly through those meetings that the Council can get to know the views of other

Member States on the issues of which it is seized. They should not be held just for the sake of accommodating non-Council members. My delegation urges the Council to consider reflecting, in its report, the general views of Member States on issues with which it has dealt and to what extent those views have been of value to its work in its future reports.

Moreover, we note that the Council has continued its engagement with troop- and police-contributing countries. We encourage continuation of that practice. The Council may wish to consider incorporating such engagements into its timetable of meetings, as appropriate. By the same token, we urge the Council to consider increasing the frequency of its engagements with Member States and other stakeholders using platforms such as Arria-formula meetings. Intensive engagement with Council members will foster Member States' confidence in the Council and thereby dispel misunderstandings between them and the Council.

We note that the Council has had to deal with complex conflict situations in Africa and elsewhere. However, the report is largely a narration of events and meetings, along with an enumeration of decisions or resolutions adopted during the reporting period. It would be better if the report were more detailed and analytical with regard to the challenges that the Council has faced in fulfilling its mandate; how its efforts affect peace processes in conflict areas; and, if the level of compliance with its resolutions varies, what causes that variability and how the Council intends to solve it. We are confident that the Council will rise to the occasion in future and present reports to the Assembly that will shed more light on its internal dynamics.

Allow me at this juncture to turn to the question of Security Council reform. The President's commitment to continuing the process of reforming the Council is indeed encouraging. We welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, and assure him of our support during the sixty-seventh session. We are confident that under his leadership we will make considerable progress.

The need for early reform of the Security Council was universally agreed on by the international community at the World Summit in 2005. Yet, seven years later, negotiations on reforming the Council still show little progress. Member States have had opportunities to state and rehash their positions during the multiple rounds of the intergovernmental negotiations held so far. Consequently, all our positions on Council reform are a matter of common knowledge. But there is still discord as to what shape and size a reformed Council should take. Today's debate gives us an opportunity to reflect on how to move the process forward without further delay.

Today, there are too many factors that speak to the necessity for Security Council reform. Nations are rising up against dictatorial regimes in defence of their basic human rights and freedoms. People are standing up to political oppression. In some countries, that quest for freedom, human rights and democracy is met with atrocious force and brutality. Innocent civilians, women and children, suffering the brunt of brutal regimes, look to the United Nations for help. Sadly, the multilateral system is struggling to respond to such challenges in a coordinated way. Individual interests in the Council continue to dominate the collective will of the majority. Owing to its anachronistic nature, the Security Council remains largely inept at fulfilling its mandate; hence the need for its reform. Double standards have always characterized its work and have been a major impediment to building a safer and more secure world.

The adoption of decision 62/557 ushered in new hope that the determination to comprehensively reform the Council is our shared ideal. We agreed on the scope of the negotiable elements, which include the size of an expanded Council; categories of membership; regional representation; veto power; working methods and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. It is the view of my delegation that decision 62/557 should continue to be the basis for Security Council reform negotiations, if we are to realize our goal of having a Council that reflects modern geopolitical realities.

We need no reminding that Security Council reform is an integral part of strengthening the United Nations system. We must therefore negotiate in good faith and mutual respect. Reform must take into account the interests and concerns of all Member States, especially those currently underrepresented. Needless to say, the expansion of the Council in both categories is an answer to Africa's absence from the permanent category and underrepresentation in the non-permanent category. The reform we pursue should be genuine and comprehensive. A piecemeal approach would only perpetuate the status quo, which is clearly untenable.

We must refrain from taking steps that could undermine the current momentum. Our goal should

always be to manage the process in such a way that we achieve results. We must look at the larger picture and not make our individual aspirations a priority. Let us approach reform of the Council with open minds, making the necessary compromises, while at the same time respecting differences of opinion. As we do so, let us ensure that all our initiatives benefit from the views of the great majority of the membership. Transparency and inclusivity in the steps we take will be key to our success. It is our hope that real negotiations will commence soon.

I wish to conclude by pointing out that, if we stay mired in our irreconcilable differences on how to reform the Security Council, the United Nations will remain as it was 67 years ago and will become increasingly irrelevant to the modern-day world. We must therefore allow nothing to dissuade us from realizing our goal of a reformed and democratic Security Council. With renewed political will and determination, we can give impetus to the negotiations and thus be able to agree on a reform model that reflects the realities of the twenty-first century.

Mr. Balé (Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to say that the Republic of the Congo subscribes fully to the statements delivered on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement. I would also like to thank Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri for his presentation of the report on the activities of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012 (A/67/2). In that regard, I would like to convey my delegation's appreciation for that body's efforts to fulfil the mission entrusted to it by the Charter of the United Nations.

While the report is exhaustive and can be said to give a full account of the many activities undertaken by the Security Council, it tells us little about the challenges that that body, which bears principal responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has had to deal with during the period under consideration, particularly in the area of preventing and managing various crises and conflicts. That is why my delegation considers that the improvements apparent in the presentation of the report do not obviate the necessity of making it more analytical and a better expression of the views of its members, which would illuminate the challenges more clearly.

Nevertheless, my delegation welcomes the creation of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa as a response to the desire of the States in our subregion to have a tool that can henceforth support them in their efforts to prevent conflict and build peace. That is part of a healthy trend demonstrating that the Security Council is involved in preventing conflict and promoting peace.

Similarly, the Republic of the Congo, as a member of the African Union Peace and Security Council, welcomes the improved cooperation between that regional body and the United Nations Security Council, and hopes that that will lend momentum to the promotion of peace and security in Africa, a region where more than half the issues on the Council's agenda originate.

I take this opportunity offered by this debate on fair representation in the Security Council and expansion of its membership to commend the facilitator of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for his leadership and the energy he has poured into that endeavour since 2009. Our discussion of the Security Council's report gives us yet another chance to assess the development of a process that has proven to be very challenging and to consider our future course of action.

All living organisms must evolve. The Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and which we want to see become more transparent, more energized, more democratic and more adapted to the realities of the current world, is no exception. From that point of view, we expect that the intergovernmental negotiations begun on 19 February 2009 on the issues of fair representation in the Security Council, the expansion of its membership and related questions will lead, through consensus, to some concrete results and eliminate the outmoded rejection of Security Council reform, which the world of today — and justice — call out for.

Granted, differences of opinion among the various groups and stakeholders persist, especially with regard to the question of the expansion of the membership in the permanent and non-permanent categories. The issue of the veto is even more divisive. The matter of the Security Council's working methods and its relations with the General Assembly is less controversial but nevertheless impedes the global consensus that is needed. Still, despite lingering differences of opinion, the eighth cycle of discussions has shown that some

bridging of significant divides is possible and might lead to the beginning of genuine negotiations.

We all agree that the Council needs reform. But the reform that we call for is one that takes into consideration regional representation, especially in the case of Africa, which, as the Council stands now, has no representation in the permanent category. Moreover, it has become clear that throughout the negotiation process all Member States have agreed regarding the historical injustice done to Africa, the only continent not represented in the permanent member category of the Security Council. The resistance on the part of some States to draw the logical conclusions about the way to redress that injustice sadly flies in the face of the unanimous acknowledgement of the injustice and betrays a curious irrationality.

It should also be noted that the agreement between the African Group and the group associated with draft resolution A/61/L.69/Rev.1 on the question of Security Council reform has, without any doubt, energized the intergovernmental negotiation process and considerably widened Member States' support for the common African position, as set out in the Ezulwini Consensus. We particularly welcome that development.

The reformed Security Council we envision would be more representative, more in line with the current realities of the world today, more democratic, more transparent and more responsible in fulfilling its fundamental mission. For that to come about, the Council must be more attentive to the aspirations of all Member States, especially developing countries, including small States.

In my delegation's view, the dynamism of the intergovernmental negotiation process over the past three years gives reason to hope that obstacles can, bit by bit, be overcome, because delegations have so often voiced their support for Security Council reform that they clearly show genuine political will to that end. For its part, the Congo reiterates its belief in the principles and goals of Security Council reform and will continue to work with an open mind towards that goal.

Mr. Nakonechnyi (Ukraine): At the outset, let me express our gratitude to the President of the Security Council for the month of November, the Permanent Representative of India, for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/67/2), as well as to the delegation of Colombia for its efforts in preparing the report during its presidency of the Council in July.

Without a doubt, the work of the Security Council seems every year to be more difficult than the previous one, and that trend was clearly seen during the past months, when we faced several challenges in various parts of the world. The Council's main task of effectively addressing challenges and maintaining international peace and security remains critical.

We are witnessing a time when the political landscape is dramatically changing, as people around the world demand and fight for their rights to freedom and equal opportunity. One has to recognize that freedom of choice is a universal principle, to which there should be no exceptions. The Council cannot remain indifferent to those developments, and it must deal with such issues in a comprehensive way, not as isolated, unrelated problems.

My delegation strongly supports the Council's prioritization of its engagement in conflict prevention and mediation. Ukraine considers those two tools to be indispensable items in the Security Council's kit. That approach was one of the main drivers of Ukraine's only term so far in the Council as an independent State in 2000-2001. At the same time, there is still some room for the enhancement of such activities.

In that context, we appreciate the overview provided in the Council's report. However, my delegation would appreciate it if non-members of the Council could be updated on the issues discussed in monthly consultations. In our view, regular substantive open updates by the Security Council presidencies would be equally beneficial to the Council members and to the wider United Nations membership, as they would encourage and strengthen the overall culture of prevention and mediation on the part of the Organization.

Having carefully studied this year's report, we must state that there is still room to improve the prognostic and analytical components in assessing the work of the Council. Moreover, we support the idea that future annual reports of the Council should reflect the general views expressed by non-members of the body during its open debates.

Ukraine supports developing dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations working in the sphere of international peace and security, in accordance with Chapter VIII of

the Charter. We are ready to contribute to that process in our role as Chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2013. We will be glad to share our views on that issue and our priorities at the briefing in the Council in February 2013.

Let me now turn to the issue of Security Council reform. Ukraine considers the modernization of the Security Council to be an issue of exceptional international significance. Making the Security Council more representative and balanced and its work more effective and transparent, especially with regard to its decision-making process, is vital for adapting the United Nations to the global realities of the twenty-first century. Security Council reform should be implemented in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

We support increased representation in the Security Council of developing countries from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. We also strongly believe that the overall enhancement in the Security Council composition should be based on the existing regional groups. As pointed out by the President of Ukraine in the Assembly Hall in September (see A/67/PV.9), my country is open to discussing all progressive concepts of Security Council reform that can lead States Members of the United Nations to the broadest possible agreement. In that context, my delegation holds that any existing or potential formula will only gain in legitimacy by envisaging enhanced representation of the Group of Eastern European States through allocation to it of one additional non-permanent seat.

As to the current state of play and the way forward, we broadly share the relevant assessments and suggestions made by the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, which were outlined in his latest letter to Member States. We congratulate Ambassador Tanin on his reappointment as chair of the negotiations, and would like to underline our delegation's commitment to progress in those negotiations. My delegation also welcomes the newly elected members of the Council and looks forward to progress in the area of improving the work of that important body.

Ukraine has always been an advocate of a strong United Nations with the Security Council, as its principal organ, entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. That commitment will further guide my country's activities in the United Nations, including in event of our election to the Security Council for the term of 2016-2017.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I welcome the opportunity to participate in this joint debate on the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/67/2) and on the question of Security Council reform.

I wish to thank the Permanent Representative of India for his presentation of the Council's report at our preceding meeting. We appreciate the effort he is making to provide information that is of higher quality and centred more on analysis than on simply relating the facts. We encourage him to continue in that direction in order to improve the cooperation and interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly. Essential ingredients to achieve that objective are transparency and greater participation of all Member States in the activities and decisions of the Security Council, especially on issues that affect them directly.

I now address the question of Security Council reform. I associate myself with the statement delivered by the Italian delegation at the 38th meeting in its capacity as focal point of the Uniting for Consensus group.

At the outset, I would like to express to the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Spain's full support in the fulfilment of his role as guarantor of impartiality in conducting the process of intergovernmental negotiations. We note the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin as chair of those negotiations. Ambassador Tanin knows he can count on Spain's utmost support in helping him in his obligation, which undoubtedly is a very demanding responsibility. The leadership roles of the Assembly President and of the coordinator are indispensable for ensuring a good result of the process, in which Member States alone have the ability to make proposals. With the fulfilment of that premise and the accumulated experience gained by Ambassador Tanin, I am sure we will progress on a solid basis on this sensitive issue.

I should like to share Spain's views on Security Council reform. We need to adapt the Security Council to the realities and demands of the twenty-first century. We need a Council that is more democratic, more transparent, more efficient, more inclined to assume its responsibilities and be accountable for them. The

process of negotiations that brings us towards that horizon must respect, in accordance with decision 62/557, a global approach that would include the five key issues and not fall into the temptation of favouring some of them to the detriment of others. In an undertaking of this magnitude, despite the fact that the negotiations have been protracted for far longer than is desired, there is no room for any acceleration prompted by self-interest. The final outcome ought to be broadly satisfactory, because otherwise the effort would be a useless failure.

My delegation is convinced that the most democratic proposal that has been submitted for consideration by all Members is that of Uniting for Consensus, as it is the fairest and most inclusive. For that reason, and with due respect for the other proposals, we believe that it is the only one capable of generating a broad consensus. It is our belief that the necessary enlargement of the Security Council should not result in an increase in the number of its permanent members. Instead, we propose to provide formulas that facilitate and increase the opportunities for all Member States to serve in that organ, as well as longer-term and/or more frequent participation for States with a larger presence in the different areas of the Organization. The idea of establishing long-term seats is aimed at this second purpose.

Uniting for Consensus advocates abolishing the veto or, if that is not possible, regulating it to reduce its practice to a minimum and to thus avoid the abusive and unjustifiable use of that privilege. To that end, the right of veto should be relinquished in alleged crimes of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity, and when the veto is used, the reasons should be publicly given.

Another key objective of this reform is to achieve geographic representation that accords with the new reality of the international community of States. That we need to rectify the poor representation of the African continent is inexcusable. The proposal of Uniting for Consensus takes into special consideration the current anomaly, which should be corrected by allotting an appropriate number of long-term seats to African countries.

Uniting for Consensus wants to improve the Council's working methods by promoting its transparency and ineraction, which will also result in a smoother and more efficient relationship with the General Assembly

Spain would like to be able to receive with sufficient prior notice a programme of work for the current exercise. We encourage Ambassador Tanin to work in close consultation with Member States. Decisions 62/557, 63/565 and 64/568 establish the comprehensive and inclusive nature and the centrality of the role of States in the negotiations. Respect for the rules of procedure and the development of a well-structured programme of work will pave the way for achieving concrete and satisfactory results in the next negotiating round. Spain believes that we are capable of bringing them about by working together with a constructive spirit and avoiding maximalist approaches.

Mr. Estreme (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First I wish to thank the President of the Security Council for introducing the report (A/67/2) to the General Assembly on the meetings and activities of the Council and of its subsidiary bodies in the past year.

My delegation has observed a trend towards an increase in the workload of the Security Council in the period under review with the persistence and emergence of new crises in Africa and in the Middle East in particular. Argentina is following those developments with attention, particularly since it will be joining that body on 1 January 2013.

My delegation would also like to highlight Portugal's leadership during this period with a view to improving the Council's working methods. We recognize the strides made in this area where the outstanding issues of greater inclusiveness and transparency of the membership are still unresolved. That is why in the course of our mandate during the next two years, Argentina will place particular importance on trying to increase transparency with regard to the work of the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies.

That said, we regret once again the fact that this Security Council report lacks more analysis and continues to be limited to a great extent to an account of facts, from which we cannot make a conclusive assessment of the Council's substantive activities. We also regret the fact that the report was circulated very little in advance so that delegations, including Argentina, were not able to study its content carefully.

Argentina remains committed to achieving Security Council reform as soon as possible with a view to a more democratic, transparent and inclusive Council that represents all regions of the world — in particular

Africa, where the majority of the Council's activity is focused and which is underrepresented in that organ.

That reform should necessarily comprise five pillars and must the outcome of a consensus in line with the outcomes of the relevant General Assembly resolutions and decisions. In that framework, Argentina, which is a member of the Uniting for Consensus group, remains committed to working with all Members and groups to achieve the common goal. We are convinced that we can achieve that reform only if our positions become more flexible, as Uniting for Consensus has pointed out.

The initiatives on partial reform, or those that seek to speed up the process or that do not take into account national ownership by Member States of the intergovernmental negotiations not only will prevent us from moving forward but also are likely to push us backwards. In that respect, we warn against the potential adverse effects of partial initiatives, wherever they come from.

Argentina and Uniting for Consensus welcome the decision of the President of the General Assembly to work with all Members and with the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Tanin — whom we thank for his work — in a framework of transparency and predictability as essential ingredients for a successful reform process. We trust that under the leadership of the President we will be able to achieve tangible progress in the current session.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of India for presenting the annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2) to the General Assembly on behalf of the Council (see A/67/PV.38). I would also like to thank the delegation of Colombia and the Secretariat for preparing the report.

In the reporting period, the Council actively fulfilled the mandates entrusted to it under the Charter of the United Nations and made important efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security and in the peaceful settlement of disputes through good offices, mediation, dialogue and consultations. The Council has closely followed the developments in the situations in the Middle East and in Africa and has endeavoured to facilitate the proper resolution of outstanding problems between the Sudan and South Sudan through dialogue and negotiations. The Council has also actively maintained security and stability in the Sahel region and further promoted peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan, Timor-Leste, Sierra Leone, Haiti and other countries.

The Council is committed to combating terrorism and to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It attaches great importance to protecting the rights and interests of women and children in armed conflict and to strengthening cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

The Security Council has kept up with the efforts to improve its working methods in order to better fulfil its mandate and to increase the transparency of its work. It has held many open meetings and debates and has enhanced its exchanges with the General Assembly and other principal bodies of the United Nations, non-Council members and countries contributing troops to peacekeeping operations. The Council has also conducted frequent exchanges of views with relevant stakeholders through such innovative formats as informal interactive dialogues.

China supports the Council in its ongoing efforts to improve its working methods. At present, the international community is facing increasing challenges in the area of peace and security. We hope the Council will pay greater attention to the needs and demands of Africa and support the efforts of the African Union and regional organizations in Africa to maintain peace and security on the continent. The Council should make better use of such means as good offices and mediation to prevent conflict and turmoil, to reform and improve peacekeeping operations and to support post-conflict peacebuilding efforts in order to further contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

China supports the Security Council in enhancing its authority and efficiency through appropriate and necessary reform so as to better implement the mandate of maintaining international peace and security entrusted to it under the Charter. The Council should give priority to increasing the representation of developing countries, in particular African countries, on the Council. Security Council reform should be conducive to more opportunities for more countries — especially small and medium-sized countries, which constitute the majority of the United Nations membership — to take part in meetings and to participate in the Council's decision-making.

Security Council reform is both complex and necessary. It affects the vital interests of Member States, and currently there remains a wide divergence

of opinions on the issue. Member States should continue to actively work toward consensus and to meet each other half way through democratic consultations. Imposing any artificial deadline for the reform or taking forceful action when the conditions are not favourable will not help to resolve problems but will only lead to aggravating differences and confrontations among Member States.

The five clusters of issues under Council reform are interrelated. We should seek a comprehensive package of solutions. A piecemeal or phased approach will go nowhere. The efforts to reform the Council should continue through the main channel of the intergovernmental negotiations. We should promote their orderly progress, pursuant to decision 62/557, and the principles of openness, transparency and inclusiveness. Ownership by the membership is the important principle guiding the negotiations. Continued compliance with that principle is both the prerequisite for the appropriate development of the reform process and the guarantee for successful results of the reform.

Imposing any solution will make it impossible to accommodate, to the greatest extent possible, the legitimate interests and concerns of the vast majority of the membership. Without the mandate of Member States, we should not allow any wilful attempt to streamline the participation of Member States or to reduce the options for negotiations.

China hopes that Member States will continue to effectively take advantage of the platform of the intergovernmental negotiations to galvanize mutual interests in an effort to seek the broadest possible agreement on Security Council reform.

Mr. Maza Martelli (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador welcomes the convening of this debate on Security Council reform. We are convinced that it is an essential and urgent issue for the strengthening of multilateralism as the practicable way for enhancing the capacities for legitimate action by the United Nations in order to contribute in an effective, democratic and inclusive manner to maintaining peace and security and thereby to prevent conflicts and humanitarian crises caused by humankind's great economic, social and environmental problems.

Therefore, my delegation believes that the only way to achieve significant changes in the Security Council is through its genuine reconstruction. That requires enlarging its membership in both categories, with a balanced representation. That is essential when decisions are made, above all when those decisions can redefine the balance of power at the global level. All that must be in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The international political balances must respect to a certain extent the diversity of existing interests, but most of all the well-being of all peoples. In our view, that requires greater regional representation of both Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean in an enlarged Security Council. In that regard, we reiterate our support to the proposal made by the Group of Four, which is aimed at defining, in a first stage, the increase in the representation of permanent and non-permanent members as an essential element commensurate with the new global geography and new international challenges. It includes improvement in the working methods.

As we have said in previous meetings, El Salvador agrees on the importance of reforming the Security Council to make it a more inclusive, democratic, transparent and equitable organ that corresponds to new global challenges and is a mechanism for the peaceful settlement of international disputes in a broadened context. Our delegation believes that any process which involves a reform or improvement of the Council must be approached through a process of intergovernmental negotiations and be based on the greatest possible political acceptance, which is naturally reflected by consensus or at least with a majority greater than two thirds.

The Member States have expressed interest and readiness to continue to move forward with the negotiations. Nevertheless, it has not been possible to get past the practice of just making statements of position to come to real negotiations that yield concrete results. Therefore, we believe that it is vital that there should be genuine political will and flexibility in order to move beyond this stage and have a future with an organ that is more representative and therefore more effective and legitimate in implementing its decisions.

Similarly, we consider it important that the intergovernmental negotiation process should continue and move to direct negotiations based on a concentrated text that allows progress in this process, since the time left for achieving agreement on this subject is running out as we face history. The international reality on the ground clearly shows the need to address this reform in the shortest term possible.

El Salvador would like to highlight, and express its appreciation for, the ongoing commitment of all Member States to continue the dialogue on this very important issue in order to ensure that we have a strengthened United Nations in the situation that the international community is currently experiencing and the obligation to prepare ourselves for the future. El Salvador will continue to support proposals that allow us to improve and enhance the system of multilateral coordination and all those spaces that enable us to produce proposals that are then reflected in effective responses to overcome the situation of inequality and injustice and to create a world with greater solidarity and equality.

Mr. Çevik (Turkey): At the outset, let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his reappointment as the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We also thank India for presenting the annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2) at our preceding meeting.

Turkey would like to see a more accountable, transparent, effective and democratic Security Council, to be reformed on the basis of decision 62/557. In that regard, we believe that the five key issues identified in the decision, namely, the categories of membership, the question of the veto, regional representation, the size and working methods of the Council and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly should be addressed as a package to reach a comprehensive solution.

We are convinced that a broad-based and comprehensive solution can be achieved by compromise, which requires flexibility. We also believe that the primary responsibility of this process rests with the Member States. We further believe that African countries must be given special emphasis in the reform agenda so as to achieve a more equitable geographical representation. With this perspective, the Uniting for Consensus proposal takes into account the legitimate aspirations of Africa.

In closing my remarks, I would like to highlight once again that the Uniting for Consensus group will continue to work constructively with all stakeholders for a compromise and broad-based solution.

Mrs. Morgan (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the President for convening this joint debate on the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly and on Security Council reform. Similarly, I wish to thank the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of India, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2), at the 38th meeting. I would like to express our special gratitude to the Permanent Representative of Colombia, since his delegation was in charge of drafting the report. We acknowledge Colombia's effort to make the Council's annual report more analytical, addressing the concerns of the membership in that regard.

I wish to refer to the question of Security Council reform in more detail. First of all, I would like to express appreciation for the letter of 9 November from the President of the General Assembly, in which he informs us of the appointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin as facilitator of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. I congratulate Ambassador Tanin on his appointment, and I reiterate to him Mexico's support for the development of an authentic process of intergovernmental negotiations. We agree with the Assembly President that transparency and predictability are essential elements in this process.

The responsibility that the President of the General Assembly has entrusted to Ambassador Tanin is a very important one. The role of a facilitator, especially in such a sensitive area, consists of compiling the positions of Member States and, on that basis, defining a path that would make it possible to generate the necessary agreements to achieve a solution that would enjoy the broadest possible support of the Member States. In order to achieve that, the facilitator is entirely dependent on the flexibility that States show with regard to that common goal. Without that flexibility or willingness to compromise, the facilitator's room for manoeuvre is reduced to a minimum. In such circumstances, we can only expect the facilitator to interpret positions or, worse, to discard or minimize delegations' proposals.

Since the start of the intergovernmental negotiation process in 2009, my delegation, together with the members of the Uniting for Consensus movement, has been actively advocating the so-called compromise proposal, whose purpose is to bring the positions of Member States closer together in order to reach a solution acceptable to everyone. So far, however, we have not seen the flexibility necessary to achieve that compromise. We once again emphasize the urgency of beginning a genuine negotiating process as soon as possible, one in which delegations do not content themselves with reiterating their customary positions

but become genuinely involved in a shared consideration of concrete alternatives that make it possible to address the concerns of the broad majority of Member States. We cannot achieve that goal while we are not ready to give up particular aspects of our original positions so as to arrive at a general solution that satisfies the membership and improves the representativeness, transparency and accountability of the Security Council.

Mexico is ready to begin that negotiation process. Together with Uniting for Consensus, we have presented a compromise proposal that reflects our willingness to be flexible and seek a compromise solution. We believe that it can be achieved if we address three essential elements: improving the Security Council's representativeness, correcting the geographic imbalance that has worsened in recent years; instituting longer-term seats so that some States can participate for a longer time in the Council while at the same time preserving accountability through periodic elections; and improving and making more transparent the Council's working methods and decision-making processes, including the question of the veto. We are ready to discuss the details of the proposal within the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations and in any format, formal or informal, that seeks a compromise solution, a solution that is the result of negotiations and not the imposition of one option over the rest. We hope soon to receive a clear schedule of meetings with that goal.

Mr. Och (Mongolia): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the representative of India for presenting, at our 38th meeting, the annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2), and Ambassador Néstor Osorio and the Colombian delegation for their preparation of the report during Colombia's presidency of the Council in July. We also take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, on his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council. Mongolia commends Ambassador Tanin's efforts to conduct a more in-depth discussion of Member States' initiatives on Security Council reform.

Eight rounds of intergovernmental negotiations have taken place in the informal plenary of the General Assembly since the adoption in 2008 of its historic decision 62/557. We have had the opportunity to discuss our principled positions, as well as some proposals, on the five key issues of comprehensive reform of the Security Council. I believe it is very important that we continue our work on the issue.

Mongolia would like to reiterate its principled position on advocating a just and equitable expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, whereby due representation of both developing and developed countries, including small States, is ensured. We also attach paramount importance to the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution, with an emphasis on those groups that are underrepresented or not represented at all, particularly from Africa, Asia and Latin American and the Caribbean. My delegation believes that only expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership can ensure that the Council reflects contemporary world realities and can ensure greater and enhanced representation of developing countries. That will serve to achieve the goal of a more accountable, representative and transparent Security Council.

Mongolia continues to share the view of the majority of Member States that the right to the veto needs to be abolished eventually. In the meantime, its use should be restricted, in particular by stipulating that it should not be used under certain circumstances. As long as the veto right exists, it must be extended to new permanent members, who must have the same responsibilities and privileges as the existing permanent members.

Finally, I would like to welcome the President's desire to assist and facilitate Member States in advancing the common agenda, including the ongoing Security Council reform process. And I wish to express my delegation's sincere hope that, under his strong leadership, the General Assembly will make meaningful progress in the current session towards timely reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Missaoui (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank the President for making Security Council reform one of his priorities, and to assure him of my country's firm support for every effort on his part to conclude that process during the current session and under his presidency. I would also like to commend the facilitator of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Mr. Zahir Tanin, for his untiring efforts and for the way in which he has conducted those negotiations, and to congratulate him on the renewal of his mandate during the current session.

Regarding the question of equitable representation on the Security Council and the expansion of its membership — the subject of my delegation's statement — I associate myself with the statements made at the 38th meeting by the representatives of Algeria and Egypt on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively.

Tunisia believes that the intergovernmental negotiations form the only suitable institutional framework, tasked by the General Assembly with dealing with the issue of Security Council reform in an open, inclusive and transparent manner in order to find a solution and to garner the widest possible political support among Member States, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant Assembly decisions, particularly decision 62/557. While welcoming the results of the most recent stage of the intergovernmental negotiation process on the question of equitable representation on the Security Council and expanding its membership, results based on Member States' proposals, I would like to declare my delegation's complete willingness to continue its support for the progress made in the negotiations within the framework of a process that should continue to display the transparency, the inclusive nature and spirit of consensus that have characterized it so far.

The main goal of that process should be a Security Council that reflects the political and economic realities of our world today and that has the legitimacy necessary to act on behalf of the international community in accomplishing its mandate, all in accordance with the Charter. Enhancing the Council's legitimacy will undoubtedly lead to more effective decisions, more realistic mandates and more consistent implementation of decisions.

The reform must be thorough, transparent and balanced. It must ensure that the Council's agenda reflects the needs and interests of both developed and developing countries. It must also address all substantive issues concerning, inter alia, the composition of the Council, its regional representation, working methods, agenda and decision-making process, including, in particular, the right of veto, in order to ensure the broadest possible political agreement among the Member States.

My country's delegation is of the view that the end point of any Council reform must be the strengthening of that body's equitable representation, credibility and effectiveness. The Council must under no circumstances become a private club of countries with particular privileges, or be seen as such. That would be a real danger for its resolutions and their effectiveness, as well as for the legitimacy of the Council's handling of sensitive issues such as those related to international peace and security.

At a time when the world is undergoing profound transformations and major geostrategic changes, the Council's permanent members themselves recognize the imperative need to adapt international relations and the dynamics that govern them. The Council, being at the heart of those dynamics as the body having the ultimate task of maintaining peace and security in the world, certainly must not be spared any adjustment or adaptation to current regional and international realities.

Mr. Balé (Congo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Those goals will be achieved only by enlarging the Council, particularly with respect to the developing countries. Similarly, the size of the restructured Council must reflect all sensitivities of the international community.

In that context, Tunisia continues to strongly support the position of the African Union as reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus on the reform of the Security Council and the Sirte Declaration. We believe that it is time to correct the current situation, which has always deprived the African continent of a permanent presence in the Security Council. We support any formula that would give the developing countries in general and Africa in particular the place they deserve in the Council.

In fact, Tunisia, which has participated since the 1960s in many peacekeeping operations and has contributed through its contingents or its diplomacy to resolving conflicts, knows very well the challenges brought about by wars and hotbeds of tension. My country remains convinced that a Security Council with such restricted membership and such rigid mechanisms will be unable to meet either current needs for a rapid, effective and appropriate response to emerging conflicts, or the aspirations of peoples of the world who see in the United Nations and its executive body the only recourse when all hope has vanished.

I will conclude by raising the need to consider, in any reform effort, the relations between the Security Council and the other principal organs of the United Nations, and the need for the Council to fully respect the

prerogatives and functions of each of those organs, in particular the General Assembly. Those issues must be considered with the same importance as other aspects of the reform process, and in an integrated manner.

Mr. Grima (Malta): Few would deny the need to reform the Security Council to make it better reflect the world of the twenty-first century. At the same time, 20 years into a process of discussion among the Organization's membership, meaningful progress, regrettably, remains an elusive goal. Member States, in particular small and medium-sized States, continue to search for ways to reform the Council to make it more representative, more efficient and effective, more accountable and more transparent in order to better address the challenges of our time.

Malta has formed part of Uniting for Consensus since its earliest days. I wish to recall the basic principles underpinning our position on how best to move our discussion forward.

Malta remains of the firm view that the five key issues agreed to by consensus in decision 62/557 of 15 September 2008 are interlinked. In maintaining those five key issues as one component, we would ensure that the reform of the Security Council would be conducted in a coherent and cohesive manner. In turn, that would safeguard the interests of all Member States and provide a reformed Council with the much-needed ownership of the broader membership.

Security Council membership must be more reflective of present-day realities. Therefore, like many others, Malta strongly believes that the Council's membership should be increased. I would like to recall that since the last Security Council enlargement, in 1965, 76 countries have joined our Organization as new Member States. Thus it is logical that one of the key issues that need to be resolved is the question of the enlargement of the reformed Security Council so as to take into account the larger membership of 193 States.

The position of small and medium-sized States in an expanded Security Council should figure prominently in our discussions. Only the Uniting for Consensus proposal has specific non-permanent seats for both small and medium-sized States. It is also statistically the most advantageous proposal for all small and medium-sized States, as well as for the great majority of large States. That fact is not only stated by the Uniting for Consensus group, it is also very well reflected in the table prepared by the recently formed independent non-governmental organization Platform for Change, which aims to educate and inform the diplomatic community and civil society on the important issues and events surrounding United Nations reform.

The intergovernmental negotiations have clearly shown that there is at least agreement on one issue among all States Members of the United Nations, and that is that there should be an increase in the non-permanent category.

As to the effectiveness of the Security Council, it is crucial that the Council respond more rapidly to emerging situations by improving in its working methods. There is a need to accelerate the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies, including the sanctions committees and working groups, especially by giving more attention to cases presented to them by Member States. Regarding effectiveness, my delegation feels that the Council must deal with issues, especially those of a long-standing nature, in a fair and balanced way, make less use of the veto and consider the interests of the wider United Nations membership in decisions it takes. It is recognized that many of those issues depend on the political will of the Council's permanent members, as they have the veto power to approve or to not approve any changes to the Council's working methods.

Notwithstanding, many of us believe that improving the working methods would, in turn, have a direct and positive effect on the question of the transparency and efficiency of the Council itself. My delegation feels that all Member States should be given the possibility of knowing more about issues and receive prompt, relevant and current information on matters brought to the Council's attention. In addition, to the extent possible, there should be fewer closed meetings and more open briefings and consultations. Permanent members should be encouraged to work more closely with the majority of the Member States and to consider more seriously the suggestions for improvement in the working methods.

Decision 62/557 lays the basis for a negotiated solution based on the five key issues. The smooth transition of those discussions and negotiations to the Assembly's sixty-seventh session augurs well for our deliberations. My delegation believes that it is important that the achievements of the Member State-driven process not be lost, and we strongly appeal to delegations not to take unilateral initiatives or piecemeal approaches that will weaken the process rather than bring us together.

My delegation appreciates the role that the President's predecessors have played in trying to bring the views of various delegations closer together and, in so doing, to define and agree on an approach that would do justice to all Member States. We also appreciate the wide consultations which the President has conducted in recent weeks with Member States on the way forward, which underscores his understanding and insight on what he so rightly described in his 9 November letter as a complex and sensitive matter.

I congratulate the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, on his reappointment. As a neutral and impartial actor, his main role should be to build confidence among Member States and promote consultations with predictability and full transparency.

The President's task in guiding our deliberations in the coming weeks will certainly not be without its difficulties, and in his effort he will have Malta's full support. Uniting for Consensus has always shown flexibility and a readiness to compromise. We have acted constructively in the past and will do so in the future.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to thank Ambassador Tanin for his tireless efforts and commitment to the matter before us.

The delegation of Nicaragua would like to align itself with the statement made at the 38th meeting by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, who spoke on behalf of the group of countries that supported draft resolution A/61/L.69/Rev.1, which has grown to become the largest, most diverse and most representative group in these negotiations. At every stage of our negotiations, the L.69 group has clearly presented its proposals and shown its interest and its willingness to look at the approaches and all existing positions in order to enter once and for all into real negotiations and thus comply with the decisions of the General Assembly on urgent reforms in the Security Council.

The General Assembly is the most representative and most legitimate organ of the United Nations, and we are thus grateful to be able to express our preferences on this matter in this organ.

Nicaragua reaffirms its firm commitment to the Organization's reform process and to the intergovernmental negotiations on equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Despite having worked on this topic for more than 20 years, we have not made the progress that the urgency of the case requires. We hope that delegations will make a commitment to work and reach an agreement on the Security Council. We believe that we cannot wait any longer to take action and achieve the long-awaited reforms. Allow me to reiterate the commitment of the Republic of Nicaragua to working actively and constructively on this very timely matter.

Nicaragua is pleased once again to reiterate its position on how to achieve a Security Council that is more democratic, equitable and representative. As we have established on different occasions, it is urgent to reform the Council in a thorough and comprehensive way. At the Assembly's sixty-sixth session, there were eight rounds of exchange of positions among the States, where the fairness of our positions was heard and where those positions gained the support of an overwhelming majority of Member States in the intergovernmental process. During that session, Member States had the opportunity to meet with different groups in order to have an overview of the positions of every region, which is indispensable for doing good work and for coming up with a good proposal for making progress in this area and thus help to strengthen the Security Council.

We believe that the time has come to be more specific when it comes to the future of the negotiations. It would be regrettable if we just overlook the exercise of the last eight rounds of talks and start again in the current session another round of discussions with the groups and States repeating their same positions.

Nicaragua feels that it is crucial to have a fair increase in the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council in order to achieve an equitable balance in the Council. The increase in the number of members could be between 25 and 27. The increase in the number of permanent members should take into account the equitable representation of all regions, especially Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa, regions which, despite the fact that they have a large number of Members in the United Nations, have always lacked permanent representation in the Security Council.

We would like to take advantage of this opportunity to refer to the veto of the permanent members. The great majority of Member States have clearly shown their preference to abolish the veto. Nicaragua fully shares

that position. While negotiations are continuing on this item, the new permanent members of the Council to be elected should have the same privileges and prerogatives as those held by current permanent members.

It is our wish that the aforementioned proposals be taken into account and acted upon as soon as possible. Our demands are not excessive; on the contrary, they are timely if we want to improve the Organization. Nicaragua again commits itself to working along those lines and to doing all that is within its reach to achieve the crucial objective that is the full democratization of this Organization.

Mr. Khan (Indonesia): I would like first to thank the President for convening today's important debate on the two interconnected topics. We thank India, as the current President of the Security Council, along with other Council members, for presenting the annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2).

On the topic of the Council's report, Indonesia associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Egypt at the 38th meeting on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The large number of Council resolutions, presidential statements and field visits during the period under review underlines the seriousness of current challenges to global peace and security. It also underlines that the Security Council's role remains as crucial as ever and that all members of the international community should fulfil their responsibilities to assist the Council in defusing problems and building lasting peace.

Indonesia commends the Security Council for its actions in many of the cases mentioned in the report. At the same time, it is dismayed at the lack of action and the Council's perceived lack of evenhandedness on certain issues.

The lingering question of Palestine is a major case in point. We very much hope that the situation of Palestine will be dealt with equitably by the Council and that the veto will not stand in the way of enabling the Palestinian people to realize their legitimate rights and aspirations.

Too much bloodshed has occurred in Syria as well. We reiterate that all parties in Syria must immediately cease the violence, ensure the delivery and access of humanitarian aid, and fully observe international humanitarian law. A Syrian-led political process is the way forward, and for that, both sides must create a space for a genuine, credible and mediated political dialogue.

It is vital that the General Assembly, whose members entrust the Security Council with the maintenance of international peace and security, have a better understanding of how the Council handles matters. While the Council's annual report has improved in providing the context for the various issues it considers, there is room for more analysis, with a description of rationales, particularly when the Council could not take action. We therefore also support the notion that explanations of vetoes in the Council should be circulated to all Member States. A more meaningful Council report, setting out the reasoning behind its actions, will also help to elicit support for its decisions among the wider membership. Working within the mandates of the principal organs, greater transparency, interface and cohesiveness in and among the organs will lead to better outcomes for global peace and well-being.

That brings me to the second topic of today, which for us means the imperative to undertake a comprehensive reform of the Security Council that makes it effective, accountable, democratic and representative of the world's plurality. Indonesia supports the rollover of the intergovernmental negotiation process to the sixty-seventh session and commends the work of Ambassador Tanin. Indonesia welcomes his reappointment as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We will continue to work closely with all Member States in order to achieve tangible results in the Council's reform.

Understandably, the stakes in the Council's reform are high. The meetings on specific issues that Ambassador Tanin convened during the sixty-sixth session yielded an in-depth deliberation on the specific proposals by the various groups and were useful for further defining and advocating their perspectives.

Although there is more clarity on the various proposals, fundamental differences still remain, particularly on the issues of membership categories, size and the veto. Greater political flexibility is required from all sides to move to points of convergence. A viable way to enable meaningful advancement needs to be explored. We believe that an intermediate approach with a clear review mechanism should be explored in greater detail, as should a realistic option for achieving tangible and consensus-based Council

reform. A number of countries have expressed a similar view.

Indonesia emphasizes the need to consider all five key reform issues together, as an interrelated package. As agreed in decision 62/557, the reform should be undertaken in a comprehensive manner that encompasses the five key issues. The integrity of that consensus-based decision should be upheld. Any piecemeal approaches that address only one or two key reform issues and includes a particular presupposition with regard to the Council's final shape and representation should be avoided.

We should also not generate any parallel United Nations tracks, which may destabilize the already established negotiating framework and create further political hurdles. The reform of the Council should take place through a consensus-based formula, or at least enjoy the greatest possible political acceptance, that is, well beyond a two-thirds majority.

In conclusion, I reiterate the Indonesian delegation's commitment to continuing to constructively engage and contribute towards a comprehensively reformed Security Council.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India and President of the Security Council for the month of November, for introducing the annual report of the Council (A/67/2) at the preceding meeting. It is very important to encourage better interaction between the Council and the wider membership. That would benefit the United Nations as a whole, particularly the developing world, which constitutes the largest group. We also congratulate Mr. Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, on his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform and for his leadership in guiding its complex deliberations.

Kazakhstan recognizes that the geographical imbalance in the Security Council and limitations in its operations still exist. Kazakhstan therefore reiterates its commitment to reform of the United Nations, primarily the Council, on both those fronts. With a view to enhancing regional representation, my delegation reconfirms its position on increasing the Council's membership from the existing 15 members to 25 by establishing six permanent and four non-permanent Council seats. The structural reform of the Council should represent a modern and realistic world.

Moving the negotiations forward demands a new understanding to bridge the divergences among the vast majority of Member States. We need to bridge the positions of all the groups concerned. We therefore call for a spirit of compromise and inclusiveness in order to achieve the widest possible consensus. We would like to propose the following recommendations for full consideration.

The proposals of the most recent intergovernmental negotiations regarding the veto right, with all its implications, should be carefully reviewed so that a viable solution can be found. We believe that a change in the working methods does not require an amendment to the Charter of the United Nations or a two-thirds majority to be adopted. Kazakhstan believes that any improvement in the working methods will not limit the power of the Council or subordinate it to the General Assembly, but rather will strengthen the Council to make it more efficient.

In addition, Kazakhstan suggests some further steps to achieve the outcomes we are seeking. It is critical to have all the proposals by Member States on the table in order to achieve greater transparency and accountability and fairer participation; increased access to information through open briefings, thematic debates and consultations with non-members of the Council; the involvement of troop-contributing countries in the decision-making processes on peacekeeping operations; and easy availability of provisional agendas, draft resolutions and presidential statements.

It is equally imperative to strengthen the mechanism for cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly, since the latter represents the interests of all Member States. In particular, the most crucial unresolved disputes in the Council could be discussed in the Assembly to ascertain the positions of the majority of Member States on vital issues so as to make possible a more informed adoption of Council resolutions.

We welcome the measure to increase the number of open Council meetings and to reduce the number of closed meetings to ensure greater transparency. That is particularly important for countries when the Council deliberates the cases of their immediate neighbouring countries or others in the region, given the relevant input they can provide and in order to assess the interrelated

impacts and consequences. States not members of the Council need to know first-hand and objectively the decisions and positions of Council members, not through the lens of the mass media, with its distortions.

To conclude, I once again express Kazakhstan's commitment to engage in the intergovernmental negotiations and work in a spirit of compromise and cooperation in order to speedily finalize Security Council reform. The reform process cannot wait very much longer, given the new emerging global geopolitical realities and socioeconomic developments, which call for a realistic and results-driven approach.

Mrs. Namgyel (Bhutan): First of all, I would like to associate ourselves with the statement delivered at the 38th meeting by Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, Permanent Representative of Jamaica, who spoke on behalf of the group of countries that sponsored draft resolution A/61/L.69, of which the Kingdom of Bhutan is a member. We believe that the points he made reflect not only the views of the largest and most representative group working on agenda item 117 but also clearly point the way forward on the most important tasks facing the United Nations.

While seven years have passed since the World Summit's call for early reform of the Security Council, each passing day adds to the obsolescence of a system devised for a world that, after more than 60 years, has changed beyond recognition. My delegation recognizes the various other groups that are also engaged in trying to contribute to moving the process forward. In that regard, my delegation would like to express its deep appreciation for the Herculean efforts of Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan. We welcome his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations.

My delegation is deeply encouraged by the progress being made in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform over the past few years. The progress, however modest, must be seen in the light of the fact that the arrangements we agree to must accommodate the views of 193 Member States. My delegation would therefore urge that there be greater effort and negotiations in good faith so as to arrive at consensus on that very important issue.

Bhutan aspired to a non-permanent seat on the Council at the recent elections, and we deeply value the experience we had in interacting with every Member State during the campaign. We firmly believe that our experience is instructive and relevant to the more than half of the membership of the United Nations that are small States. It has also further reaffirmed the importance of having a larger and more representative Security Council that can provide opportunities for all countries, regardless of their size or economic capacity, to contribute to promoting and enhancing international peace and security.

My delegation therefore believes that the L.69 group's position on each of the five key issues in decision 62/557 provides a firm basis for greatly improving the efficiency, transparency and legitimacy of the Security Council and bringing about a transformation that would enable the United Nations to deal most effectively with the challenges faced by the international community in the twenty-first century.

Before concluding, I wish to thank Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India, for introducing the report of the Security Council (A/67/2) on its work during the past year, as well as the Ambassador of Colombia and his team for their hard work in putting the report together.

Mr. Šćepanović (Montenegro): At the outset, allow me to thank the representative of India for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2) at the 38th meeting, and the delegation of Colombia for preparing it. However, I will limit my intervention to agenda item 117, entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters".

I would like to thank the President for his efforts to advance the Security Council reform process during the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. I also wish to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, on his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations.

Security Council reform is an ongoing process that should neither be limited in time nor unnecessarily delayed. That having been said, yet another round of the intergovernmental negotiations is now behind us. Our exchanges within the framework of the eighth round of negotiations proved to be very useful and practical, as they helped us all to attain a better and more detailed understanding of each of the five proposals put forward.

Thanks to the extensive deliberations that took place in previous rounds, especially the last, I dare to say that there are really no more unknowns in any of the proposals. On the contrary, we have learned about

and become very familiar with even their smallest details and particularities. For a process as complex as that of Security Council reform, that is very important. But there comes a time when one must ask whether pursuing further deliberations in this fashion would make any sense, because even though we call the process intergovernmental negotiations, we have yet to engage in real, substantive negotiations.

What we have seen so far is a repetition of the same or slightly modified rhetoric that has led us to a point where we must admit that we have hardly moved from the starting point. It is obvious and urgently important for the relevance of the Security Council that we cannot continue with business as usual. It is up to us, the Member States, together with Ambassador Tanin, to find a new approach in order to engage in a more constructive and results-oriented manner that will bring us closer to the desired reform, that is, a reform with the broadest possible acceptance with respect to all five of its aspects. In that context, it could prove useful to strive to develop a base for a possible compromise solution with a common denominator that could be further built upon. A building block with that orientation could be the African common position and the historical injustice inflicted upon the African continent.

We must constantly remind ourselves that negotiating is a process of give and take. We all need to show a high degree of flexibility and pragmatism in order to create an atmosphere of trust and good faith that will allow us to take concrete steps towards accomplishing our ultimate goal. Keeping the big picture of overall reform in sight, we cannot focus just on self-interest and aspirations; rather, we have to take into account those of others as well, if we truly want to make a breakthrough. In addition, in keeping with our position, it is of the utmost importance that we be realistic and cognizant of the fact that some of the existing proposals, if not individually, then as part of the larger incorporated package, are definitely not feasible and could indeed turn out to be counterproductive to the work of Security Council.

We should be under no illusion — getting to a package solution on Security Council reform will be extremely difficult and a rather challenging task. I believe that every single Member State has a stake in this matter and wants to see the Council reformed in a way that makes it more transparent and representative and better suited to cope with the global security challenges that are not lacking today's world.

Let us therefore leave behind old practices and methods that have proved to be insufficient and ineffective. We cannot gain by exploiting each other's weaknesses. Instead, we must be innovative. We must explore and unite our strengths and advantages, because a reformed and improved Security Council is our common goal and necessity.

Mr. Sareer (Maldives): Let me begin by expressing our profound appreciation to Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India and current President of the Security Council, for introducing the report of the Security Council (A/67/2) at the 38th meeting. I would also like to welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. Under his chairmanship, we look forward to a very substantive discussion on the issue of the comprehensive reform of the Security Council during the current session of the General Assembly.

Maldives and other Member States have, on numerous occasions over the past decades, expressed their desire to see wide-ranging reforms of the Security Council and to make the Organization more effective. Such reforms have now become an integral part of the Organization as it addresses the challenges and difficult tasks before the international community today.

As we have heard during the debate, there is a clear need to update the configuration and working methods of the Security Council to make it more representative and transparent. In that regard, comprehensive Security Council reform lies at the heart of our efforts to revamp an international structure that came into being more than 67 years ago.

For the United Nations to make progress as an institution that is effective and credible in the eyes of the world, the Security Council must be expanded and restructured to reflect today's geopolitical realities. The Maldives is of the view that including both India and Japan in any future composition of the Security Council remains an important and fundamental prerequisite for the reform and effective functioning of the Council in the twenty-first century.

We welcome the President's statement on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and his commitment to finding a just and agreed-on methodology to move things forward. My delegation

commends the recent positive results achieved during the intergovernmental negotiations on the matter and stresses the need to maintain the momentum in addressing specific areas of reform. The thematic rounds of discussions held during the past session, dedicated to Member States' initiatives, were extremely helpful. The frank and open discussions provided an opportunity for Member States to assess the various viewpoints being presented and to identify the points of convergence and divergence in the five key areas of reform.

While the Council's composition remains a key priority, we believe that its working methods must also be improved with a view to restoring the Council's credibility, authority and legitimacy within the United Nations system. In that regard, we applaud the initiative taken by the group of five small States earlier in the year, which put forward a useful guide in improving the working methods of the Council (see A/66/L.42/Rev.2).

We believe that the expanded membership of the new Council should come from both developing and developed countries and should include countries that reflect the diverse membership of the United Nations. However, geographic representation alone should not be a deciding factor in determining permanent membership on the Council. Other considerations, such as a country's ability to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy, should be taken on board.

Maldives firmly believes that the Assembly must be fully committed to implementing the provisions of its decision 62/557 and subsequent decisions, in letter and in spirit, in order to carry out comprehensive and wide-ranging reforms of the Security Council. We fully support the stand taken by the President of the General Assembly to advance the reform process through a constructive and consultative process in informal plenary meetings. Furthermore, we call for the widest possible political acceptance by Member States in the negotiation process. We believe that a failure to reach consensus should not prevent action on these important reforms.

Before I conclude, I would like to express my hope that consensus can be achieved on a solution to the issues of the general reform and composition of the Security Council. We must be united in our resolve and pragmatic in our approach in order to break the impasse that has caused United Nations reform to stagnate for the past 20 years. Only by working together can we achieve a Security Council that is representative, efficient and able to deal with the complex challenges of the world we live in.

Mr. Gálvez (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking the Permanent Representative of Colombia for preparing the annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2) and the representative of India for introducing it, at the 38th meeting, in his capacity as President of the Council for the month of November.

The presentation of the report by the Security Council to the General Assembly is very important, as the report is a record of the Council's work and chiefly because it provides transparency with regard to the management of the Council and has the potential to enable improvement in some procedures that need it.

While recognizing the effort and progress made by the Security Council and the delegation of Colombia in preparing the report, we are convinced that there is room for the report to grow and recast itself as a more substantive document. It is a good record of meetings and issues dealt with, but in its current format it does not enable us to understand the development of an issue, and even less to explain the logic and reasoning applied in any action undertaken.

To be sure, there have been improvements in recent years, but we cannot be complacent about the situation. There is nothing preventing us from moving in the right direction and insisting, for instance, on the importance of coordinating the Security Council's work with that of other United Nations agencies and of regional groups or of listening to special representatives at the right time and holding more interactive debates and consultations. We are convinced that making progress in that direction, which allows for the smooth and flexible exchange of information, is a good tool for preventing potential conflicts. It can make possible a global and comprehensive vision in which the interests and concerns of the various stakeholders involved in a particular issue are recognized by the Security Council and can, to a greater or lesser degree, be incorporated into its decisions.

Adequate and smooth communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly that respects their particular areas of competence is fundamental to the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the principles and central objectives of the Charter of the United Nations in a more complex

and dynamic international environment. However, we regret the decision to return to joint consideration of the report of the Security Council and the question of equitable representation on and increased membership in the Council and related matters. In our opinion, keeping them separate would have allowed for a better discussion and analysis of both.

With regard to agenda item 117, entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", my country is grateful for the President's letter of 9 November, which expresses his personal commitment to this subject during his term. We welcome the decision to reappoint the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, to lead the intergovernmental negotiations on Council reform. After the eighth round of those negotiations, we hope that during the current session we can show the political will and flexibility that will enable us to make concrete progress with reform that is as essential as it is desired. Ambassador Tanin can count on our support and cooperation.

As we have stated repeatedly in this forum and during the recent intergovernmental negotiations, my country is a firm believer in an expanded Security Council and reaffirms its position on the need to have equitable representation within the Council. In that regard, we support an increase in the number of both permanent and non-permanent members, with a particular preference for developing countries, even if the right to the veto is not extended to the new members. We offer bilateral support for the admission of Brazil, Germany, India and Japan to permanent membership in the Council. Similarly, we believe that the underrepresentation of Africa in the Council's current makeup must be dealt with. The number of African countries and the fact that a large percentage of the matters with which the Council deals are related to situations in that continent make a greater African presence essential. In addition, we reiterate our commitment on this issue and would like to emphasize the need for more transparent and participatory working methods in order to enhance the capacity and legitimacy of the Organization.

During the negotiations round table, we made an urgent appeal to delegations to abandon absolutist positions and make progress on the serious and broad-ranging discussion that allow us to bring together the perspectives and aspirations of Member States in a democratic and respectful way. Today we reiterate that appeal and call for the necessary flexibility from all parties in order to reach formulations that are acceptable to all.

Notwithstanding what I have referred to, there seems to be an opinion shared by the majority on the importance and necessity of improving the working methods of the Security Council in order to ensure greater transparency and inclusiveness. In that regard, my delegation believes that nothing should prevent us from making progress on issues on which there is a common position — above all as it seems, for the time being, that there is no political will for comprehensive reform. Let us not make this process a futile exercise. Although we recognize how important working methods are to Member States, we nevertheless appeal to delegations, in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, to work together to find or develop the tools that will allow us to make progress on this issue.

Mr. Escalona Ojeda (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We support the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The annual report of the Security Council (A/67/2), which covers the period from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012, is like an inventory of the activities carried out by that organ pursuant to the powers granted to it by the Charter of the United Nations on how to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security. We believe that the Security Council continues to consider issues and to adopt resolutions that go above and beyond the powers granted to it by the Charter.

The world is in the midst of a process of an imperial hegemony being imposed upon it, and that includes the United Nations. That colonization can be seen in the "securitization" of the General Assembly's agenda, and it is reflected in the report that we are considering. Items include women and peace and security, the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security, the imposition of security sector reform in some countries and topics such as climate change, drugs and organized crime, justice and the rule of law, among others. All of those topics have been discussed, and instruments have been adopted that enable the Security Council to intervene in areas under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly, thus impeding the democratic process in the Assembly.

Moreover, we are very concerned to see that some peacekeeping operations receive mandates to interfere with the sovereignty of countries that have emerged from violent conflicts. Taking advantage of their institutional weaknesses, they try to impose forms of organization, laws and institutional models that are not an innate part of those peoples' aspirations.

Topics of great importance for international peace, in the period under review, have been a source of great concern for countries, such as my own, that promote respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence and self-determination of peoples and respect for human rights and humanitarian rights.

The systematic transgression of laws by Israel as an occupying Power is treated under the item on the evolution of the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine. But that evolution is no more than a systematic violation of human rights, especially if we bear in mind the ongoing occupation of Palestinian land. The atrocities committed by the State of Israel against the Palestinian people are unacceptable. They expose the double standards of those who exercise their veto right to condemn the Palestinian people.

The report is not objective when it comes to Syria. Security Council members tried to boycott the mediation to stop the war, for they are working to overthrow the Government. They are renouncing democratic procedures and violating the principle of the self-determination of peoples in order to change the geostrategic balance of the region, thereby deferring any possibilities for peace.

Perhaps the darkest chapter in the report is the section dealing with Libya. If a historian a few decades from now looks at the role of the Security Council, he will conclude that that body was an instrument of destruction and death in that region, where NATO played a nefarious role with clear international impunity. We contiue to believe that it is extremely dangerous to continue to use the defence of human rights as a pretext to destroy a country, thus in fact curtailing its capacity to act as a free nation.

Mediation is an obstacle to war and is constantly shunned by countries that are trying to dominate us with their belligerence. We are concerned to see that the report overlooks the many recommendations that Member States have made during open debates, where, it seems, our ideas are falling on deaf ears. That discredits the democratic process within the United Nations.

The report submitted by the Security Council shows that some members of the Council choose to use threats to international peace and security for their own convenience, arbitrarily using Chapter VII of the Charter and blackmailing others with their military superiority, which makes the world more unstable and less safe.

General Assembly resolutions should be binding in nature, and the responsibility for international peace and security must be upheld by the General Assembly. This body, the most universal, inclusive and democratic body of the United Nations, should be the one that resolves such important issues.

With the presentation of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, we must reiterate our demand, as a Member State, that they not continue to usurp the functions that are the sole and exclusive responsibility of the organs of the United Nations system. The champions of war and interventionism are trying to weaken the role of the General Assembly. In that connection, Venezuela calls for a revamping and a democratization of the United Nations so that it represents the aspirations of all peoples and so that international relations become more democratic, as well as to prevent global powers backed by the use of force from setting the global agenda and, in doing so, also setting the United Nations agenda. In that way, we would be saving multilateralism and the agency of our peoples.

With regard to the question of Security Council reform, we would like to thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan for his efforts as coordinator aimed at promoting negotiations towards consensus among Member States. Venezuela is convinced that the General Assembly must remain the principal deliberative body of the United Nations and maintain its independence from other organs. It is crucial that we reverse the trend by which the Security Council involves itself in areas not under its jurisdiction, thereby undermining the central role of the General Assembly.

When it comes to the reform of the Security Council, Venezuela supports the expansion of the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. Council reform must ensure the inclusion of developing countries from Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean among the permanent members, as

well as an increase in non-permanent seats for them, such that the expanded Security Council will reflect a numerical formula containing 25 or 26 members, which would give that organ greater balance in its representation, incorporating the diverse geographical, political and cultural realities of the world, primarily from the developing world.

Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania associates itself with the statements delivered at the 38th meeting by the representatives of Egypt and Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States, respectively.

We welcome the report of the Security Council (A/67/2) and thank His Excellency Ambassador Singh Puri of India for his introduction, as well as the Permanent Mission of Colombia for having prepared the report. We believe that the report is one of the few ways by which the General Assembly can monitor the activities of the Security Council.

We are encourages that during the reporting period the Council discharged its mandate satisfactorily, save for a few instances were consensus among the Permanent Members proved elusive. It is important that the Council should speak with one voice on matters requiring its undivided attention and action.

Despite the satisfactory operations of the Security Council, we believe that a comprehensive reform of the Council is long overdue. We must reform the Security Council to reflect the realities of the day, with a view to enabling it to meet the expectations of the Member States as envisaged in the Charter.

Reform of the Security Council is an imperative for the sake of its continued credibility and legitimacy. In that regard, Tanzania has long advocated for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in line with the Ezulwini Consensus, which calls for two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats for Africa.

Nonetheless, we should never miss an opportunity to undertake reform on those issues which seem to enjoy the wider backing of Member States, including the improvement of the working methods of the Council. My delegation strongly believes that a breakthrough to the current impasse is urgently needed.

In that regard, we commend the work of Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan, the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. We welcome his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations and assure him of Tanzania's continued support in his endeavours.

We take note of the chair's recommendations of July 2012, in particular with regard to the need to move to the next stage of negotiations based on a concise working document and the convening of a high-level meeting on Security Council reform. The chair could assist us further by elaborating on his proposals for the sake of clarity and precision. We encourage all Member States to support the chair and the President of the General Assembly in moving the reform agenda forward during the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

The need for Africa's views and wishes to be taken into account whenever the Security Council decides on matters concerning the continent can never be overemphasized. We must therefore discourage incidents where the interests and opinions of the continent are either circumvented or ignored. It is encouraging, however, to note that the Security Council continues to work closely with regional and subregional organizations as provided for under the Charter. That partnership as witnessed in Darfur, the Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia and Mali is encouraging and should be strengthened.

We value and commend the practice by the Council of holding open debates and consultations, including consultations with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001). We believe that, looking forward, that approach is essential for ensuring the transparency, vibrancy and relevance of the Council.

In conclusion, I wish to underline the importance of the present joint debate to consider matters of concern to the entire membership of the United Nations. We should ensure that recommendations agreed upon by Member States are utilized to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the work done in the Security Council and elsewhere.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these items. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council contained in document A/67/2?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): My delegation would like to exercise its right to reply in response to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Japan has been making serious efforts to contribute actively and constructively to the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of prosperity in the world. Indeed, Japan has been elected as a member of the Security Council 10 times since its accession to the United Nations, in 1956, and has been devoting the utmost effort to contribute to the Council in a responsible manner. Is there any better measure or vote of confidence in Japan shown by States Members of the United Nations than our track record of being elected to the Security Council 10 times by a more than two-thirds majority? We believe that our policies and actions over many decades speak for themselves. Japan has demonstrated that it has the determination, willingness and capacity to take on further responsibility as a permanent member in a reformed Security Council. We trust in the judgment of other Member States regarding Japan's contributions.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I want to clarify the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea concerning the statements of the representatives of South Korea and Japan.

Concerning the representative of South Korea's statement on the peaceful satellite launch and nuclear test and Security Council sanctions, all those allegations are misleading the public and are far from the true reality on the ground. In that regard, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to clarify its position as follows.

First, the satellite launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was fully in exercise of its sovereign right under international law. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a State party to the Outer Space Treaty, which stipulates that it is every country's right to carry out peaceful activities in outer space.

Secondly, with regard to the so-called resolutions, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea totally rejected them as soon as they were adopted. If the Security Council is serious about peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in the region, it should have taken issue with, and raised the issue of, the joint hostilities of the United States and South Korea against the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It should have taken issue with their large-scale, ever-increasing aggravation of tensions on the Korean peninsula through joint military exercises, which are estimated to have involved half a million troops in one single exercise at the beginning of this year. But it has never taken issue with them; yet, they have taken issue with our peaceful satellite launch, in violation of international law. We therefore regard those exercises as illegal and totally reject them.

The nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula is the product of the United States hostile policy against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The hostile policy of the United States has continued for over half a century, with nuclear blackmail directly threatening the survival of the nation and threatening the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Therefore, our nuclear deterrent is a war deterrent and a response to the threat and hostilities of the United States in order to defend our country and safeguard our sovereignty and our right to existence as a nation.

Concerning South Korea's allegation, it is absurd and ridiculous when one considers that the South Koreans just recently received approval from the United States to extend the range of their missiles from 300 to over 800 kilometres, and when one also considers that South Korea is under the nuclear umbrella of the United States. Therefore, South Korea has no legal or moral justification to raise somebody else's issues. As far as the United States and South Korea's extension of their missiles' range, they have no say in what we do now — whether we launch satellites or we launch ballistic missiles.

Concerning the remarks of Japan's representative, again we totally reject them as misleading the public and warping reality. Japan does not have the qualifications to become a noble permanent member of the Security Council, which deals with international peace and security. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to clarify the following position.